

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

May 10, 2011

Support for Online Voter Registration Legislation for Los Angeles County

Citizens

Online voter registration would provide greater access to voter registration to all citizens in Los Angeles County by giving voters the opportunity to submit and complete a voter registration affidavit electronically by accessing an Internet web site set up by the Los Angeles County elections official.

Currently, it is estimated that more than one million citizens in Los Angeles County are eligible to register to vote but have not done so. Online voter registration would greatly expand access for many of these potential voters. A sizable share of this population is younger and more likely to use the Internet to obtain information to transact business.

Online voter registration also allows for potentially significant cost savings to operations related to the processing of paper-based voter registration forms, including savings from the reduced use of paper forms, which is also environmentally conscious.

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The Office of the Registrar Recorder-County Clerk reported to the Secretary of State on its November 2010 Election Day Survey, that 454,037 new valid registrations were received in paper format during the period from the close of registration for the November 2008 general election until the close of registration for the November 2010 general election.

Previous efforts (Senate Bill 854, Chapter 481, Statutes of 2007) to promote online registration have included a measure to require California Community Colleges (CCCs) and California State Universities (CSUs), and urges the University of California (UC), to provide students the option of requesting a voter registration card pre-printed with relevant information (e.g. name, address) as they electronically register for classes. As colleges shift to this system, the Secretary of State would no longer have to mail out millions of blank voter registration cards to college campuses for them to distribute to students, as required under previous legislation.

Senator Leland Yee, who represents the 8th Senate District of California, has introduced SB 397, which would authorize counties to develop and use an electronic voter registration system for the electronic submission of an affidavit of voter registration from a person who is qualified to register to vote, who has a valid California driver's license or state identification card, and who resides in that county. SB 397 would authorize a person who is qualified to register to vote and who has a valid California driver's license or state identification card to submit an affidavit of voter registration

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electronically on the Internet Web site of the county elections official of the county in which the person resides if that county has opted to comply with specified provisions.

I THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Officer to express the County's support for SB 397; and direct the Sacramento advocates to actively promote its passage into law.

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